WHEN MY BROTHER FELL

FOR JOSEPH BEAM

When my brother fell
I picked up his weapons
and never once questioned
whether I could carry
the weight and grief,
the responsibility he shouldered.
I never questioned
whether I could aim
or be as precise as he.
He had fallen,
and the passing ceremonies
marking his death
did not stop the war.

Standing at the front lines
flanked by able brothers
who miss his eloquent courage,
his insistent voice
urging us to rebel,
urging us to not fear embracing
for more than sex,
for more than kisses
and notches in our belts.

Our loss is greater
than all the space
we fill with prayers
and praise.